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THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY

Entered as second-class matter November 18, 1907, at the Post Office, New York, N. Y., under the Act of Congress of March 1, 1879

VOL. VIII NEW YORK, JANUARY 16, 1915 No. 12

In March, 1905, I was present at the Classical Conference at Ann Arbor. The portion of the programme which made the deepest and most lasting impression upon me was not one of the distinctively classical papers, but an informal talk, illustrated by lantern slides, by Professor C. H. Van Tyne, of the University of Michigan, on the Effect of Physiographic Features upon the Movement of Population. A synopsis of the talk runs as follows:

> Though discussing the question in its application to American history, he hoped that the matter might be suggestive to students of the Classics. The method might be used to show why Greek commerce took the lines that it did, why Roman conquests moved in the directions and followed the order of succession that they did. . . .
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> The population of America as it flowed westward from the Atlantic followed the arteries made ages before by geologic forces. The flood which at first merely trickled through the mountain passes and along the fertile river beds gradually made broader channels. The slender paths of the migrating bison and of aboriginal intercourse were deepened by the tread of the fur trader, broadened by the westward moving pioneer, and at last became government highways, and our great modern railroad lines. One physical attraction after another drew men from the coast, through the mountains, over the plains and the great western plateau to the Pacific slope, and the sea again. The exploitation of fur animals drew the trader west, the rich grass lands tempted the ranchman west, virgin soils of the prairie and river valleys drew the farmers west and at last the coal and iron fields brought the manufacturer deep into the heart of the continent. Even the part of America where the first manufacturers took their rise had been determined ages ago by the old Continental glacier, which as it melted and retired toward the north left successive terminal moraines that caused rapids to be formed in the rivers of the northern Atlantic coast, which furnished the early water-power. Again, the lakes formed by the retreating glacier modified the climate of the north and helped to diversify the industries which made the European immigrant find stronger temptations to settle in the north than in the south.
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> The first settlements upon the Atlantic seaboard were made along the rivers flowing into the sea. All these were drowned rivers—the ocean tide being felt as far as Albany, Trenton, and Richmond—and the colonies planted on their banks had direct communication with the sea. The territory thus favored was closely populated before men began to settle in the back lands above the first falls of the river which made direct intercourse with the sea impossible. Then the Appalachian barrier—a broad series of parallel ranges extending from New England to Northern Georgia—blocked the way for a time. The only natural openings westward were the Mohawk valley, blocked by the Iroquois Indians, and the plains between the south end of the mountain system and the Gulf of Mexico, barred by the Creeks and Cherokees. At last this barrier was penetrated at Cumberland Gap, and further southward, and the finding of salt springs and fertile limestone soil in Kentucky and Tennessee tempted the early pioneers. Then to follow the alluvial valley of the Ohio and the Mississippi and to the branch off up the Missouri, the Arkansas and the Red was merely to go to the point of least resistance.

At the Convocation on May 29 last, which formed part of the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the School of Mines, Columbia University, I had the good fortune to hear an address on The Mining Engineer as a Pioneer, by Mr. T. A. Rickard, of the Royal School of Mines, London, a part of the Imperial College of Science and Technology. This address is printed in full in the School of Mines Quarterly, for July, 1914. The lure of gold, in particular, according to Mr. Rickard, drew the miner on, and the miner in turn contributed largely to the advance of civilization. Here is another fruitful field for interesting study in connection with the Classics. One may think of the Phoenicians (or some other early people) visiting Britain for tin, and of the part the mines of Spain played in Carthaginian and so in Roman history.

I may be pardoned for further comment on Mr. Rickard's paper. The fine English of the address, reinforced as it was by Mr. Rickard's admirable delivery, made me certain that Mr. Rickard had enjoyed and profited by a rigorous training in Classics. Later, when I met him, I found that this was indeed the case, and that Mr. Rickard is an ardent champion of the Classics—that he still reads and enjoys them, and that in his capacity as an editor of a technical journal he had learned, from bitter experience, that only those contributors who have had a good classical training can write at all well. See further THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 6.25-26.

Of all this I thought as I read the papers of Professor Keith and Professor Kent in THE CLASSICAL WEEKLY 8.42-43, 69-70, and the editorial of Professor Ullman (8.73-74), even more when I read in the New York Tribune on October 18 last a report of an interview with Dr. Douglass W. Johnson, Professor of Physiography at Columbia University. Professor Johnson has repeatedly visited the district in which the Germans have been fighting the Belgians, the French and the English, studying the physical features of the country; he has carefully examined also the Paris Basin and the plateau of Western Germany. In Schermerhorn Hall of Columbia University are maps showing the physical features of the war district, on which Professor Johnson has, by the use of colored pins, been indicating from day to day the position of the contending armies.

According to the report of the interview in the Tribune, Professor Johnson began by remarking that topography is determined by geologic structure, and that, therefore, events in the geologic history of Western Europe are directly responsible for the course of the European War.

> The present theatre of war consists of a series of complexly folded crystalline rocks of mountainous character. These rocks were once reduced by long erosion to a vast plain on a level with the sea. The plain was flooded and submerged, the surface of the rocks meanwhile having become bevelled. Layers of chalk, limestone and sandstone were deposited by the action of the water, and later the surface was raised above the ocean and subjected again to the eroding action of wind and weather. The plain, however, was raised or warped from the sea unevenly; its borders became higher than its centre; a great basin or saucer was formed, and this basin, whose rim runs across the Channel into the British Isles, was again worn down until in many places the softer chalks and limestone were washed away, to expose the original crystalline rocks. Thus cliffs or escarpments were formed facing away from Paris toward the north and east. Hence has come the name of the Paris Basin. Around its margin great patches of the original crystalline rocks rise above the softer stones. The slope leading from Paris rises gently and then drops from fifty to several hundred feet. It begins once more at the foot of the cliff and rises again until it drops in the second escarpment. The process is repeated, and the whole area of the basin presents a surface of gentle western slopes and dropping eastern declivities.
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> Most of the maps that have been printed in the papers and magazines give little idea of these conditions. Hills are indicated by sharp peaks, while the continuous slopes and long cliff lines are nowhere indicated. The features of this basin, the circular or crescent cliffs east and northeast of Paris, facing the German attack, the strong contrast presented between the eastern and western slopes of the Vosges, the plateau of Western Germany and the Ardennes, gashed by the valleys of the Rhine, Moselle, and Meuse, and the comparatively level plains of Central and Northwestern Belgium have determined the course of the present campaign. . . .
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> In the region of the Vosges and the Black Forest we find what was once the eastern rim of the Paris Basin. It formed a broad arch in Southwestern Germany. The utmost height of this arch is now the Valley of the Rhine. The Rhine Valley itself was formed by a dropping of a section of the arch in the exact spot where by all rules it should be highest. At one side of the valley are the Vosges Mountains, rising in a gradual slope from France until they take a sheer drop into the Valley of the Rhine. On the other side is the Black Forest and the broad upland to the north, also presenting its steep side to the Rhine Valley.

C. K.

(*To be concluded*)

THE PROSECUTION OF SEXTUS ROSCIUS

A Case of Parricide, with a Plea of Alibi and Non-motive

The speech of Cicero in behalf of Sextus Roscius of Ameria is the first, or perhaps the second, speech of Cicero preserved. It has always been regarded as a most interesting speech, both on account of its great literary merit, and because it presents a terrible picture of the uncertainty of life and property during those horrible years of Sulla's supremacy. Anthony Trollope, who gives a brilliant account of the circumstances, introduced his narrative thus:

> I will venture, as other biographers have done before, to tell the story of Sextus Roscius of Ameria at some length, because it is in itself a tale of powerful romance, mysterious, grim, betraying guilt of the deepest dye, misery most profound, and audacity unparalleled; because, in a word, it is as interesting as any novel that modern fiction has produced; and also, I will tell it, because it lets in a flood of light upon the condition of Rome at the time. Our hair is made to stand on end when we remember that men had to pick their steps in such a state as this, and to live if it were possible, and, if not, then to be ready to die[1].

The case of Roscius is equally interesting when considered legally. It is the first criminal case in which Cicero was engaged[2]. The phrase *causa publica*, which he uses to describe the action, is equivalent to *iudicium publicum*, the words with which he describes the case of Archias. This means that the case was tried in a court established by vote of the populus, that is to say, in a *quaestio perpetua*. The implication in his phraseology is that he has already participated in civil suits. Possibly, as many think, the civil case of P. Quinctius was earlier; in the speech delivered on that occasion Cicero says that he had been engaged in other suits before that of Quinctius[3]. Cicero had decided, even prior to his entrance into the criminal courts, to devote himself to the side of defense rather than to that of prosecution[4]. He arrived at this decision, partly because he did not wish to attain distinction at the expense of others' misfortunes, partly because he regarded success at the bar, when won in pleading on the side of the defense, as more meritorious than that won by pleading for the prosecution. His words *sua virtute* are particularly well chosen, for we shall see that criminal procedure at Rome made the path of the prosecutor infinitely easier than it made that of the defender.

The speech of Cicero in behalf of Archias is the only other oration commonly read in which the case was tried in an ordinary *quaestio perpetua*, and in that instance the argument of the prosecution was so flimsy

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[1] Life of Cicero 1.81.
[2] 59 (these and similar references below are to the small sections of the speech Pro Roscio Amerino): quod antea causam publicam nullam dixerim. Compare Orator 90 Itaque prima causa publica, pro Sex. Roscio dicta.
[3] Pro Quinctio 4 Ita, quod mihi consuevit in ceteris causis esse adiumento, id quoque in hac causa deficit.
[4] 83: Nam si mihi liberet accusare, accusarem alios potius, ex quibus possem crescere; quod certum est non facere, dum utrumvis licebit. Is enim mihi videtur amplissimus, qui sua virtute in alteriorem locum pervenit, non qui ascendit per alterius incommodum et calamitatem.